union
RAILWAYS

The Medway to Detling

The new Union Railway described

The Medway to Detling

The Union Railway route leaves the M2 motorway to join the M20 corridor close to Detling.

The railway will cross the Medway next to the M2, and run on embankment and in cutting beside the motorway along the Nashenden Valley. It will then tunnel deep under Blue Bell Hill, and emerge to run in cutting next to the A229, turning to tunnel under Park Wood. The railway will cross the Boxley Valley south of Boxley village in tunnel and low along the floor of the valley. The route will run south of Detling, screened from the village in a cutting.

One of the possible sites for domestic stations on the Union Railway is just east of the Medway, in the Nashenden Valley south of Fort Borstal. This could provide fast, high-quality rail services to a range of destinations. High-speed trains could run to a station in London at Kings Cross, and to the proposed CrossRail line into central London.

Open for detailed route information

THE UNION RAILWAY

This booklet provides information about the route which the Government has announced for the Union Railway, the high-speed railway between London and the Channel Tunnel.

The Union Railway is designed to provide:

- **The main railway between Britain and continental Europe.**
- **A major increase in capacity and improvement in the quality of journeys between Kent, Essex and London.**
- **The transport spine for the development of the East Thames Corridor.**

The route has been chosen by the Government from options developed by Union Railways Limited, the agency company set up by British Rail in 1992. The engineering, environmental and financial plans for the Union Railway have been produced in association with more than 40 leading private-sector consultancies.

The detailed proposals for the railway will be refined and developed only after consultation with those affected. You can find out more by visiting our Information Centres - dates and times of their visits to your area will be announced in the local press.

This booklet also gives brief details of Union Railways policy on a range of issues - you can find more information in other Union Railways leaflets.

WHY IS THE UNION RAILWAY NEEDED?

The Union Railway will provide the essential capacity to meet fast-rising demand for international rail travel, following the opening of the Channel Tunnel. Around the turn of the century, the existing railways in Kent and South-East London will be unable to cope with the predicted growth in demand for travel.

The Union Railway will also offer major improvements in the quality of journeys between Kent, Essex and London - much faster journeys, greater reliability, and a wider range of destinations.

The Union Railway will carry both the growing international traffic, and more than 25,000 commuters each day, in much less space than a motorway, with much less damage to the environment.

As international trains and Network SouthEast express trains will use the Union Railway, existing railways will have more room, not only for improvements to passenger services, but also for international freight traffic attracted by the Channel Tunnel. This freight would otherwise cause a major increase in lorry journeys, and up to 45 million kg of additional exhaust emissions every year. The Union Railway could also itself carry freight.

THE CHOICE OF ROUTE

The route chosen by the Government, and described in this booklet, is based on the easterly approach to London, which the Government adopted in 1991. That corridor has been studied to find a route which is capable of meeting environmental standards, and which can provide regeneration opportunities and improved rail services within the South-East. While principally conceived as a twin-track, high-speed passenger railway, the route is also capable of carrying freight trains.

The new route runs to the Channel Tunnel from a new station at Kings Cross/St Pancras in London. It can also carry international trains from London Waterloo via the existing London to Chatham line and a link line from Longfield to the Union Railway near Gravesend.

BENEFITS FOR THE SOUTH-EAST

More than half of the peak-period trains on the new railway will be for travellers within South-East England. With new Network SouthEast express trains, the Union Railway can transform rail travel between Kent, Essex and London. It will carry many more people, with much shorter journey times, more reliably and in much greater comfort, to new destinations.

The Union Railway presents opportunities to support the South-East's economy, by improving transport links for development in the East Thames Corridor and for other regeneration projects along its route.

LIMITING DISTURBANCE

The Union Railway route is the result of a comprehensive sifting process, which rejected any option which did not meet the environmental standards normally applied to major infrastructure projects. Scope to further limit effects on people, property and the environment will be discussed during the consultation process - the results of this will be carefully taken into account.

It is intended that the construction of the Union Railway will be carried out under a strictly enforced Code of Practice, to be drawn up in consultation with Local Authorities. Construction traffic would use railway land whenever possible, to limit disturbance.

PROPERTY EFFECTS

By next winter, the detailed route of the new railway is expected to be reserved, or "safeguarded", against other development. It is expected that details of property purchase arrangements will be announced at that stage.

DISCUSS YOUR CONCERNS

Union Railways wants householders, property owners, and all others affected by its proposals to have an opportunity to discuss them in detail with designers, planners and environmental specialists. This will be possible at the Information Centres which will be visiting about 40 locations along the route. The location and opening hours of the Centres will be announced in the local press.

Consultation is also being carried out with Local Authorities and other interested bodies. The Information Centres will return in the autumn to provide details of the outcome of the consultation process.

The Information Centres are intended to provide the best opportunity for direct contact with Union Railways. But if you are unable to visit one of the Centres, or if you would like more information, then please write to the address overleaf, or phone 081 760 5002 and speak to one of the liaison team.

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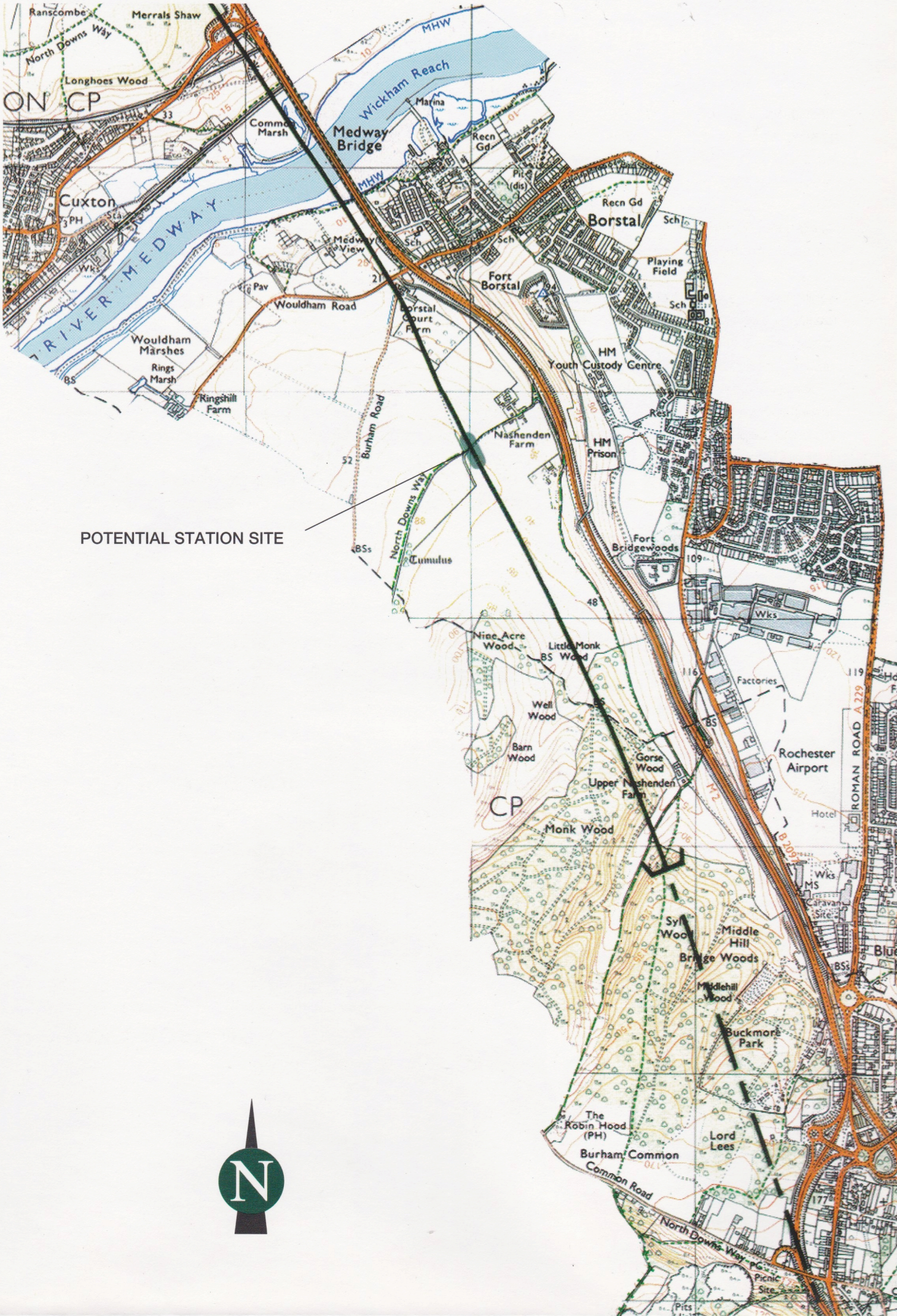
POTENTIAL STATION SITE
Ranscombe
Merrals Shaw
North Downs Way
Longhoes Wood
ON CP
Wickham Reach
MHW
Marina
Common Marsh
Medway Bridge
Recn Gd
Cuxton
PH
RIVER MEDWAY
Medway View
Sch
Borstal
Playing Field
Fort Borstal
Pav
Wouldham Road
Borstal Court Farm
Wouldham Marshes
Rings Marsh
Ringshill Farm
HM Youth Custody Centre
Burham Road
Nashenden Farm
HM Prison
North Downs Way
Tumulus
Fort Bridgewoods
Wks
Nine Acre Wood
Little Monk Wood
Well Wood
Barn Wood
Gorse Wood
Upper Nashenden Farm
Factories
Rochester Airport
ROMAN ROAD
Hotel
CP
Monk Wood
Caravan Site
Middle Hill
Bridge Woods
Middlehill Wood
Buckmore Park
The Robin Hood (PH)
Lord Lees
Burham Common
Common Road
North Downs Way
Picnic Site
Pits
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Bell
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Kit
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Taddington
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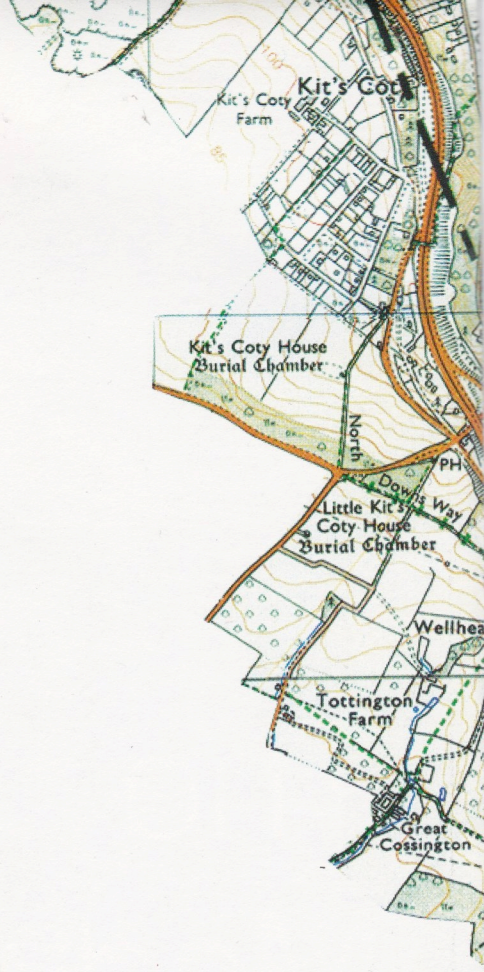
The Medway to Detling

Rochester: Nashenden tunnel entrance



MEDWAY CROSSING

The new Union Railway route crosses the River Medway about 60 to 100 metres south of the existing motorway bridge. The new viaduct will be on a similar scale, to keep to a minimum any additional obstruction of the views along the valley from Rochester.

The route runs along the Nashenden Valley next to the M2. Running in cutting, the route crosses the North Downs Way close to the Nashenden Valley water abstraction and pumping site.

NETWORK SOUTHEAST EXPRESS STATION

A number of possible sites for stations on the Union Railway have been put forward for discussion - the choice will be made after public consultation. One possibility is a park-and-ride station for Network SouthEast express trains in the Nashenden Valley. It would be south of the M2 motorway, near Nashenden Farm, and would have its own motorway junction. Network SouthEast express trains could run to a station in London at Kings Cross or to the proposed CrossRail line across London, giving much faster access to central London. Express services could also run to Ashford, for connecting international trains to destinations in mainland Europe. Economic regeneration opportunities in the area would also benefit from improved access from London, other parts of the UK via Kings Cross, and mainland Europe - without bringing development into the valley itself.

The railway design will take account of the planned widening of the M2 motorway.

NASHENDEN VALLEY TO BLUEBELLS ESTATE

Climbing from the Nashenden Valley, the railway route crosses about 800 metres of Monk Wood, mainly in cutting. Just to the south of Upper Nashenden Farm, in Bridge Woods, the railway route passes into tunnel. The tunnel will continue deep under Kit's Coty, and emerge after about 3.5km alongside the A229 Chatham Road.

Running in cutting beside the A229, the railway crosses the North Downs Way and passes under the Pilgrim's Way, over 200 metres from the Bluebells Estate.

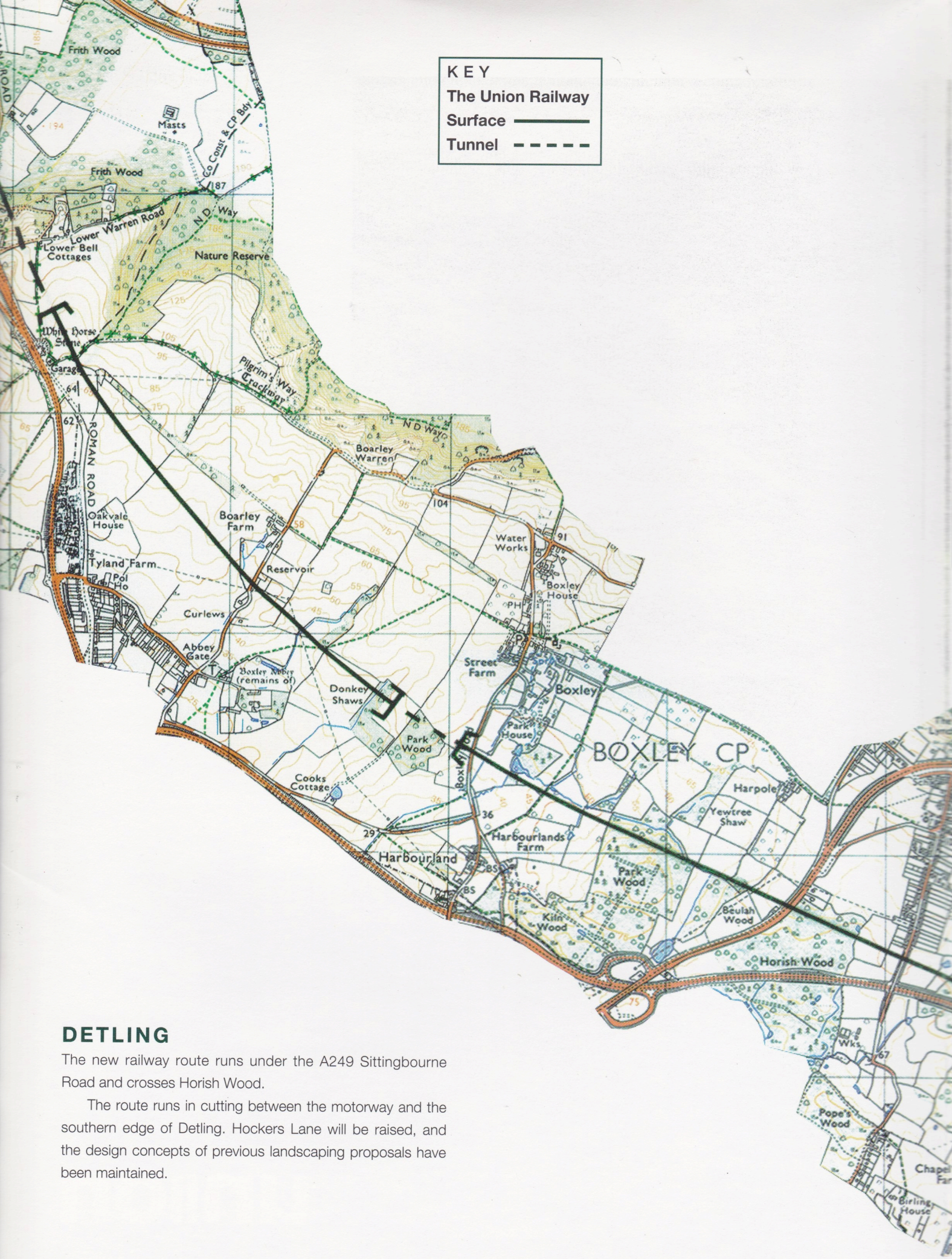
BOXLEY

The railway route turns east, away from the A229, to cross Boarley Lane, 500 metres north of the Boxley Abbey remains. It then runs through Donkey Shaws, descending into a cut and cover tunnel for 330 metres under Park Wood (west), emerging to cross the Boxley Valley to the south of Boxley.

The tunnel is provided to avoid the use of wide cuttings. Tunnel entrances will be carefully designed to merge into the landscape, with Boxley Road raised to pass over the eastern entrance of the tunnel. Abandoned sections of road will be removed and landscaped.

The Union Railway follows a surface route across the historic landscape of the Boxley Valley, keeping much closer to existing ground levels than have previous schemes.

Continuing towards Detling, the new railway will cross the north end of Park Wood (east) in cuttings. Intrusion into the woodland will be kept to a minimum, by keeping the sides of the cuttings as steep as is possible in potentially difficult ground conditions.

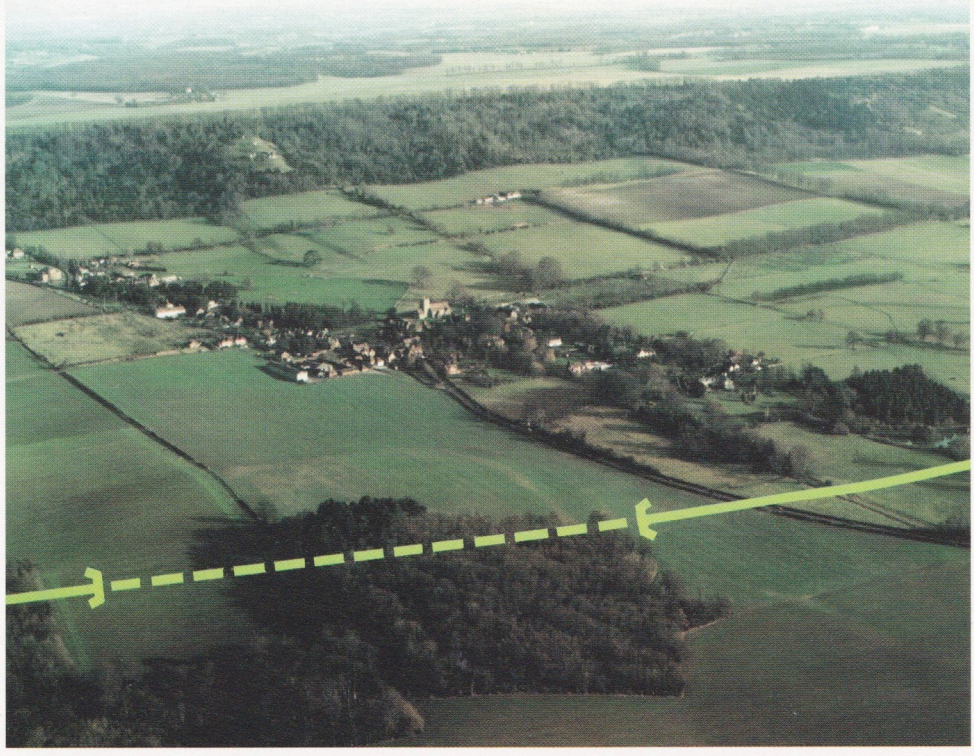


DETLING

The new railway route runs under the A249 Sittingbourne Road and crosses Horish Wood.

The route runs in cutting between the motorway and the southern edge of Detling. Hockers Lane will be raised, and the design concepts of previous landscaping proposals have been maintained.

Maidstone: Blue Bell Hill tunnel entrance



Maidstone: Park Wood and Boxley village

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OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE

These leaflets can be obtained from the Information Centres, or by writing to the address below:

- The Union Railway
- The Environment and the Union Railway
- Noise and Vibration
- Tunnelling
- The Union Railway and the UK
- Business Benefits from the Union Railway
- Consultation and the Union Railway
- Commuters and the Union Railway

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